

LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP

ARTS COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

June 7, 2023

Members

Present

Stan Smith
Pat Crawford
Laurie Holmes
Shelly Echeverria
Teresa Gonzalez

Members

Absent

Also

Present

Maria Lagasca, Library
Jennifer Regina
Rachelle Scott, Staff Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Crawford called the regular meeting of the Lower Paxton Township Arts Council to order at 4:00 pm, on the above date in Room 174 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No action was taken on meeting minutes. Ms. Scott asked Ms. Crawford to continue to prepare the monthly agendas.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Ms. Scott stated that there will be a staff person for preparation of meeting minutes. This committee is the only Township committee that was still doing their own records.

Ms. Gonzalez stated she may miss the next three meetings because of a new job, but she will update the Council as she finds out more.

LIMELIGHT ON LOCAL ARTISTS

EAST SHORE LIBRARY

Ms. Lagasca shared photos from the event on June 3, 2023. It was well attended and the artists were able to meet and talk with many people. Most people learned of the event through networking such as from the Library Newsletter, Friends of the Library Group, and some were from Ms. Echeverria's sorority Arts and Letters Committee. The artists were able

to speak to people they did not know and answer a variety of questions. Ms. Scott asked if she was permitted to share some photos on social media. Ms. Lagasca agreed that would be fine and asked that photos with children's faces not be used, otherwise they are all available for use.

Ms. Echeverria shared that she sold four paintings at the event. Ms. Holmes also sold some of her jewelry. The sold pieces will remain on display through the end of the exhibit, and then they will be released to the buyer.

Feedback

Ms. Crawford asked for feedback from the Library Staff. Ms. Lagasca suggested a small framed sign with contact information for anyone who might be interested in participating in a future exhibit. Ms. Scott suggested directing people to a weblink where all of the information can be shared. On that website, there will be a contact form for them to fill out. As this gets more popular, it can be a way to gather the artists' information and filter criteria.

Ms. Crawford noted that Tina was interested in seeing the Limelight on Local Artists at other DCLS libraries. The display areas are very attractive with the display wall and the glass case. The timeline seemed to be just right, and the event went smoothly. Ms. Lagasca would like to display items in the glass case each time. Ms. Echeverria agreed that the display area was a great way to display the artwork.

Ms. Lagasca noted that the wall display can highlight two artists by having one on the longer wall and the other on the shorter wall. This could give an opportunity to artists that may not have as much work, and it could also give an exhibit opportunity to three artists instead of two.

Criteria

Members brainstormed on ways to filter or prioritize potential artists.

Ms. Crawford mentioned that the requirements are already listed out in the legal document that artists have to review/sign.

She suggested that when soliciting artists, it may be important to describe the display area so they can decide whether their work will go nicely with that format.

Ms. Scott would like the Council to decide if they want artists from outside of Lower Paxton.

Ms. Scott noted that by having some criteria and information, the Arts Council can have input into the selections, so when the Board of Supervisors reviews the artists, they can be provided with the review criteria to reference when making their determination.

Ms. Crawford would prefer that selection not be limited to LP, but maybe residents get priority. If there are several artists hoping for a spot, the ones from LP could be chosen over others. Ms. Gonzalez suggested that proximity could also be a factor so a neighboring municipality could be a secondary priority. Ms. Echeverria suggested that highlighting "local" artists could mean Dauphin County. She also emphasized that these exhibits can also bring art into Lower Paxton. Members tentatively agreed on Dauphin County artists, with priority given to Lower Paxton residents. Ms. Regina noted that if artists bring similar art, it might be better to display them during different exhibition periods.

Ms. Crawford acknowledged that the form asks for submission of examples of their work, but they may also want to share a website where their art is shown, which would show all of their work not just a select few. The legal agreement does call for family friendly art; it must be suitable for all ages. Ms. Echeverria suggested a sampling can be submitted here, then when they get to the next step, images of the actual display pieces can be submitted. Mr. Smith noted that the Library does retain the right to remove something if it is found to be less than appropriate; this provides a backup plan for extra peace of mind.

On the website it can describe who the Arts Council is, and what the goal or intent is. Ms. Gonzalez suggested it can also direct the artists that we are looking for family friendly art and other general information. It could share the location and invite them to view it so they know what pieces would go there best. A description of Limelight, expectations, tentative schedule of upcoming events, and other details could be shared so the artists have as much information as possible.

As Ms. Scott understands it, the Arts Council will make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to say who will be displayed for which three months and their artwork consists of what. They are interested to know the Arts Council has a vetting process and they can be comfortable with the criteria expected.

Mr. Smith asked if the document needs to be updated or reviewed in case it had restaurant-specific information. Ms. Crawford added that pulling the criteria from that document might be an easy way to make a checklist for the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Scott stated that document was reviewed in detail by the solicitor in its current form; both he and the Supervisors were comfortable with it. The library also reviewed the agreement, and they were happy with it. The agreement will be signed by the artist indicating they have reviewed it and that they agree to it, prior to a recommendation being made to the Board of Supervisors.

Steps

1. submit online
2. arts council review
3. select chronologically as received
4. gather additional information
 - a. more photos or link to view the art
 - b. signed agreement
 - c. more as needed
5. let the artist know which period they will be on exhibit
6. if a submission is not suitable, the next one can be reviewed
7. if both artists are too similar or there is some other nuance, that can be addressed on case by case basis, keeping in mind that the goal is to have the space filled and not vacant
 - a. if one is a resident and one is not, the Lower Paxton artist can be given priority
 - b. potentially push the second one to another exhibit time period.

Schedule

Members discussed the timeline for quarterly display periods, information submitted to the Library, flyers, advertising, selection and vetting, et cetera, and came up with a draft schedule as follows:

July

1st Wed: AC meeting: review artists and select
Info to Board of Supervisors, signed agreement, artwork samples or link for viewing

2nd/3rd Tues: Board of Supervisors approves recommendation

August

1st Wed: Info to Library including: Artist selection, artist bio, photos of their proposed display pieces

September: advertising: flyers, signs, and other

October: Display period starts, runs 3 months

1st Sat: Reception end time should be 4pm so the library can close at 5pm. Tentatively set for 2-4pm.

Adjustments can be made as needed, but this provides general guidance.

Stats and Feedback

Ms. Lagasca requested statistics from the artists so she can show her program impact. An artist survey can be provided at the close of the exhibit. Items such as quantity sold and any other feedback.

Movie and Book Selection

Ms. Crawford asked for an update. Ms. Scott explained that the Board of Supervisors would like recommendations of movies to be displayed, including the name and description of the movie so they can review them. Once reviewed, the date and promotion can be determined. Ms. Scott stated the same protocol can be applied to the book discussions.

Ms. Crawford felt compelled to write a memo because she would like to still show the film.

Ms. Scott stated that this film was pulled because the description suggested violence and politics. As representatives in local government, they did not want to endorse that, but then it raised the question of vetting or a selection process. When it came out that one person had viewed it, it didn't seem like enough of a vetting process. Mr. Smith read the description and watched the trailer. He conceded that regardless of the movie or theme, one person viewing a movie doesn't appear as a group selection. When selecting something for the public, it is reasonable to do due diligence. A political filter can be understandable, but doesn't have to be all or nothing.

Mr. Smith stated that if we want to be inclusive of our residents, we need to know how we can provide a platform to celebrate groups in our Township; it seems logical to ask them what would celebrate them. Mr. Smith is eager to have a conversation about this topic, but he wants to avoid the inflammation that can take place when talking about such concepts. It may have been naïve to forego the conversation prior to now. The Arts Council wants to celebrate culture within the Township. This hasn't been done very well but there are ways to do it well. The concept that anyone in LP can be represented safely and in a motif that reflects their family values would be incredibly affirming.

Mr. Smith stated the Council should do what is asked of it from the leadership. Ms. Crawford asked if there should be no movies scheduled until this is resolved. Mr. Smith suggested making the list of movies we are considering, simultaneously he will try to talk one on one with some of the Supervisors to offer them the full understanding of their vision.

Ms. Crawford questioned what factors the Supervisors will use to evaluate the suggestions once the Arts Council makes the list based on personally viewing the movies. Ms. Crawford asked if the Board of Supervisors will view the movies. Mr. Smith suggested the Council provide the list as requested along with instructions on how to best evaluate the film. The list could include a summary of what the movie represents or what story or narrative is being told. An Arts Council's job is to bring these things to the community. All of the advisory boards are tasked with providing sound information and helping good decisions to be made.

He added that decisions can sometimes be made based on the squeaky wheel, but the seeing the bigger picture can help make a better decision. It is important to be part of the process that allows good decision-making.

Ms. Scott requested movie selections be brought to the next meeting so the Council can discuss them.

ARTS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Smith made a motion to recommend that Jennifer Regina be appointed to the Arts Council. Ms. Gonzalez seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed. Ms. Scott will forward the action to the Board of Supervisors.

BOOK DISCUSSION

Ms. Crawford stated there is a book discussion scheduled for June 15th. Typically they get together and discuss the current selection, then choose the next book as a group. She confirmed that she should bring a list of books back from the group so they can be reviewed. Ms. Scott stated that in order for it to be promoted as an Arts Council activity, the Arts Council should be part of the selection process, and it is now requested that the Board of Supervisors also be involved.

Ms. Scott added that if the Book Discussion continues to be endorsed by the Arts Council, it will need to be following the protocol, but it is also completely acceptable for a group of people to gather and discuss books and choose what they want to read by consensus of those in attendance, and they are still welcome to use the municipal building meeting rooms for the activity.

Mr. Smith thought there would be a list of books that the Supervisors would review, but Ms. Crawford thought the suggestions would be brought from the book group to the Arts Council who will pick one of them to recommend to the Supervisors.

Ms. Holmes stated that this is being done already, just not in a formal way. The book discussion group picks a book, Ms. Crawford tells the AC what book is being discussed and dates and other details. The AC generally agrees with the action, although it wasn't documented or formalized. Ms. Scott noted that the books will need to be reviewed prior to marketing.

ARTS COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS

Nothing additional was offered.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular Arts Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 5, 2023, at 4:00 pm at the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, Room 174.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm with a unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Hiner, Recording Secretary